

It sets a horrible precedent for any organization (government or otherwise) to be able to shut down wireless/cellular service, even in the event of a declared emergency. Emergencies are times when people are that much more likely to need to contact each other, whether to find a place to meet, assure that they are safe, or any number of reasons. It seems silly to me that I am saying self-evident things like this, but perhaps they need to be said.

As a California resident not too far from the BART station that started all of this, I understand that situations "on the ground" can become complex and challenging for law enforcement. However, I am firmly against any measures taken that could prevent me or anyone else from engaging in lawful communication, regardless of the intent. To do so is antithetical to the principles on which this nation was founded. Yes, there are some limits on speech like shouting fire in a crowded theater, but allowing public (or private) organizations to shut down cellular communication as a blanket measure for a region is an extreme measure that sets a dangerous precedent. If this were to be permitted, I fully expect that various locales will have incidents worse than the BART one over time. And by being cut off from anyone they would contact, if anyone is injured, killed or otherwise harmed as a result, who would be responsible?

Although I will concede that in some hypothetical future situation that I can't conceive, it's possible this could become a burden on local, state or federal law enforcement, the very idea seems far-fetched to me. We've had cell phones as a society for what - 20 years for early adopters and maybe 5-10 for most other people? The technology hasn't been a hindrance to law enforcement: indeed, as cell tower signals and GPS capabilities have improved, if anything it allows law enforcement to track suspects better and fight crime more effectively. To make claims about a cell phone hypothetically being used to set off a bomb (mentioned in the Public Notice) seems reaching to me. While I don't doubt that could be done, I'm sure there are plenty of other ways to do so, like radio frequency, which I imagine would stay operational so that police could coordinate among themselves. This measure wouldn't likely stop anyone who wanted to cause harm, but would harm plenty of innocent people in a time of potential emergency/disaster/confusion.

It's very disappointing to me that this is even being considered. It sets a horrible precedent for the future. Most of the time I think that people who argue about slippery slopes are overreacting, but not in this case. There should be a clear-cut line on the matter. It also bothers me that although the FCC is soliciting public comment, not much other publicity is being given to this important issue; I could have easily not found out about it. I admittedly do not have any particular suggestions for improvement though, as much of that would depend on private media organizations choosing to cover this.

I greatly appreciate the opportunity to comment on this matter. I believe strongly that interrupting wireless service is a bad idea under any circumstances, and I hope that you reach the same conclusion. Thank you.